

on the scene very early and provided critical assistance to the victims.

In emergency situations it is rightly expected that government agencies respond and help citizens in need. The Polk County Sheriff's Office, under the leadership of Sheriff Grady Judd, provided critical incident command services and logistical support for many responding agencies—and they did an outstanding job.

During the course of this accident, agencies that came together to provide critical support included the Polk County Sheriff's Office, the Florida Highway Patrol, the Lake County Sheriff's Office, the Lake County Fire Department, the Auburndale Police Department, the Haines City Police Department, the Lake Alfred Police Department, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Florida Department of Transportation, the State Fire Marshal's Office, the State of Florida State Emergency Response Team, the Polk County Emergency Medical Services, Polk County Fire Rescue and Osceola County Fire Rescue.

The State of Florida is often credited with having one of the best—if not the best—emergency response models in the nation, and the combined efforts of all responding agencies earlier this month exemplified this well. Their service likely prevented an even greater number of deaths or injuries, and I thank them for their work and service.

RECOGNIZING BILL AND BRADLEY GARR

HON. HARRY E. MITCHELL

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 29, 2008

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the father and son team of Bill and Bradley Garr. I use the word, "team" because on the afternoon of June 29, 2007, their actions helped save the life of an automobile accident victim.

On that day, as they were traveling along a Phoenix freeway, they witnessed a car go out of control and flip over. They were the first ones to stop to render aid to the seriously injured young woman who was driving. Due to the smoking engine and leaking gasoline, they needed to remove the woman from her car. They then used a fire extinguisher to make sure that a fire did not ensue. By the time fire and paramedics responded, the fire danger was over and the young woman was in a safe place.

While many others kept driving, Bill made the decision to stop and help, and in so doing demonstrated to Bradley important values that will last a lifetime.

I commend Bill and Bradley for their actions, and congratulate them on their selfless actions.

HONORING REKHA CHANDRA
SEKARAN'S SERVICE TO TEN-
NESSEE'S SIXTH CONGRES-
SIONAL DISTRICT

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 29, 2008

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor Rekha Chandrasekaran for her service to Tennessee's Sixth Congressional District while working in my Washington, DC, office.

Rekha hails from Monterey, California—just 2,339 miles away from Monterey, Tennessee, which I have the honor of representing in this esteemed body. Despite the difference in geography, Rekha has been a great help to me and my staff and has helped me to better represent Middle Tennesseans.

During her four years in the office, she has proven herself to be a strong writer and a talented systems administrator as she worked to launch a new Web site for the office. She has also taken on the task of coordinating a crew of interns each year and shepherding them throughout the Halls of Congress and around the nation's capital.

February 1 is Rekha's last day in the office, as she is leaving to pursue other opportunities on Capitol Hill. My staff and I thank Rekha for her help, and we wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

HONORING HOUSTON MAYOR LOUIE WELCH

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 29, 2008

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, the city of Houston recently lost a Texas Gentleman and great civic leader. Former Houston Mayor Louie Welch died on Sunday, Jan. 27, 2008 after a long battle with cancer. He was 89 years old. Mayor Welch's contributions to Houston government will impact generations of city residents that now enjoy a better quality of life and greater economic opportunity.

Louie Welch was born on Dec. 9, 1918 in the west Texas town of Lockney. Welch was an industrious boy who performed many tasks to earn money such as sell magazines, deliver milk and sell popcorn for a nickel a bag. In high school, he participated in debate and was elected president of his senior class. These activities were an early sign of his life-long interest in politics.

Welch attended Abilene Christian University and graduated in 1940 with a history degree. While in college, he met his future wife, Lola Faye Cure and they were married on Dec. 17, 1940. They later had five children. After Lola Faye died, Louie married Helen.

After graduating from college, his political career began in 1949 as a Houston city councilman. He served four terms as council member. With a tough political resolve, he ran for Houston mayor four times before finally becoming successful. Welch served as mayor of Houston from 1964 to 1973.

His mother's religious influence left a permanent impression with Welch who, in addi-

tion to graduating from a Christian university, was a member of Garden Oaks Church of Christ for more than 35 years and frequently quoted from the Bible throughout his life. I had the opportunity to serve on the Board of Trustees at Abilene Christian University with the Mayor.

Mayor Welch will be remembered for a rich legacy of vital construction projects that he helped oversee to completion which improved city services and prepared for future growth in Houston. These projects included construction of Bush Intercontinental Airport, Lake Conroe and Lake Livingston reservoirs which provided much needed water supplies for Houston's rapidly growing residential and commercial areas. Welch's other projects involved closing down inefficient sewer treatment plants, starting the cleanup of the Houston Ship Channel and bayou beautification.

His leadership abilities also extended into national positions with Welch serving as vice president of the National League of Cities from 1970 to 1973 and president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors from 1972 to 1973.

Mayor Welch was a man who loved Houston tremendously. He joked that he didn't tell his sons that they were born in that "northern" city of Dallas until they were much older to protect them from the horrible truth for as long as possible.

He was known for his witty observations on Texas politics and himself. He once said, "When I was elected mayor I spent the better part of my first term weeding out the political appointees I had inherited from my predecessor. Virtually all of my second term, I spent weeding out my own political appointees."

Welch even served a brief stint as guest weatherman for the local TV channel ABC 13. When weatherman Ed Brandon gave the forecast for the chance of rain one day, Mayor Welch was hiding above him in the studio on a ladder and dumped a bucket of water on Brandon's head. He told the very surprised weatherman, "You never get that right. Let's face it: it's always 50 percent. Either it's going to rain or it's not going to rain."

Following his years as mayor, Welch went to work for the Houston Chamber of Commerce, which later became the Greater Houston Partnership, and served as president of the organization for 12 years.

I met the Mayor when I was a teenager. I showed up at the Garden Oaks Church of Christ one Wednesday night seeking out a local girl. The Mayor cornered me and wanted to know who I was and my intentions. I was quite intimidated by the 5'6" Mayor, but after the interrogation, I was approved to speak to the girl—but she still turned me down for a date).

Years later, I went to see the Mayor, then President of the Houston Chamber, because I had decided to run as a Republican for State District Judge in Houston. Being a political nobody and novice I needed sound political advice from an expert. The Mayor told me no Republican had been elected to a state judgeship in Houston since Reconstruction. So, he recommended instead that I run for the non-partisan position of City Council, because Houstonians preferred "nobodies" over Republicans. I did overcome the handicap of being a Republican and for years appreciated his wise political counsel when I served as a judge.

When I taught an Adult Sunday School Class at Bammel Church of Christ, Louie and